

REMARKS

Reexamination and reconsideration of claims 1-7 and 9-17 are respectfully requested. Claims 8, 18, 19, and 20 have been cancelled without prejudice.

The Abstract of the present application was objected to for referring to Figure 3a. The Abstract has been amended to remove the reference to Figure 3a. Withdrawal of the objection to the Abstract is warranted and respectfully requested.

The drawings were objected to for not having standard lettering, lines with uniform thickness, and incorrect reference characters. Included herewith are proposed drawing corrections for the drawings. Withdrawal of the objections to the drawings is respectfully requested.

The drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a) for not showing every feature recited in claim 17. Applicants respectfully assert that, for example, Fig. 8 and the description thereof illustrates every feature of claim 17. Specifically, page 15 of the present application describing Figure 8 discloses "...a planar placement face 54, from which there extends an optical structure 56..." Therefore, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a) is warranted and respectfully requested.

The declaration was objected to because non-initialed and/or non-dated alterations were made to the declaration. A new declaration is submitted herewith to correct any defect that may have existed. Withdrawal of the objection to the declaration is warranted and respectfully requested.

The specification was objected to for grammatical and/or typographical errors. An amended specification will be filed in due course pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.125(b) to correct grammatical and/or typographical errors.

Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 112, second

paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1-7 and 9-17 were amended to remove any indefiniteness that may have existed and/or place the claims in conformance with U.S. practice. Withdrawal of the sec. 112 rejection, second paragraph, of claims 1-7 and 9-17 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 10-14, and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 102(b) applying U.S. Pat. 4,264,127 ('127). Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 8, which was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Additionally, claims 18-20 were cancelled without prejudice. For this reason, withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection of claims 1-7 and 9-16 applying the '127 patent is warranted and respectfully requested.

Regarding claim 17, the '127 patent discloses an optical detector assembly for detecting an encoded surface. See the Abstract and Fig. 1 of the '127 patent. On the other hand, claim 17 is directed to an optical connection between an optical waveguide component and an optical fiber coupling unit.

Specifically, claim 17 recites, inter alia, an optical waveguide component having a placement face, from which an optical structure extends, and an optical fiber coupling unit, the optical fiber coupling unit having a sleeve with an optical fiber attached thereto, the optical fiber coupling unit having a circumferential surface adjacent to a planar surface with a coupling face on an end portion, the optical fiber coupling unit being attached so that its coupling face is adjacent to the placement face of the optical waveguide component, thereby establishing an optical coupling between the optical fiber and the optical structure. For the reasons stated, withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection of claim 17 applying the '127 patent is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 102(b) applying the admitted prior art in Figures 1 and 2. The amendment of claim 17 is not an admission that the admitted prior art of record

10/047,569

SI01-031

Page 8

teaches, discloses, or otherwise suggests the features of the claim 17. Claim 17 has been amended to include the subject matter that was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. For this reason, withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection of claim 17 applying admitted prior art is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 102(e) applying U.S. Pat. 6,540,411 ('411). Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 8, which was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Additionally, claims 18-20 were cancelled without prejudice. For this reason, withdrawal of the sec. 102(e) rejection of claims 1-7 and 9-16 applying the '411 patent is warranted and respectfully requested.

Regarding claim 17, the '411 patent requires an optical coupling of a lens to an optical fiber using a cylindrical tube/ferrule 25 held in a first sleeve 15. See Fig. 4 and Col. 5, 11. 15- of the '411 patent. On the other hand, claim 17 recites, *inter alia*, an optical fiber coupling unit having a circumferential surface adjacent to a planar surface with a coupling face on an end portion. For at least this reason, withdrawal of the sec. 102(e) rejection of claim 17 applying the '411 patent is warranted and respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 102(b) applying U.S. Pat. 4,743,084 ('084). Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 8, which was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Additionally, claims 18-20 were cancelled without prejudice. For this reason, withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection of claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, and 14 applying the '084 patent is warranted and respectfully requested.

Regarding claim 17, the '084 patent discloses an optical fiber connector having a cylindrical rigid body 2. See the Abstract and Figs. 1-11 of the '084 patent. On the other hand,

10/047,569

SI01-031

Page 9

claim 17 recites, inter alia, an optical fiber coupling unit having a circumferential surface adjacent to a planar surface with a coupling face on an end portion. For at least this reason, withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection of claim 17 applying the '084 patent is warranted and respectfully requested.


Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. sec. 103(a) applying the '127 patent in view of either the '411 patent or the '084 patent. The sec. 103(a) rejection of claims 7 and 16 is respectfully overcome for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1. Withdrawal of the sec. 103(a) rejection of claims 7 and 16 is warranted and is respectfully requested.

No fees are believed due in connection with this Reply. If any fees are due in connection with this Reply, please charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 19-2167.

Allowance of all pending claims is believed to be warranted and is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is welcomed to telephone the undersigned to discuss the merits of this patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Michael E. Carroll, Jr.  
Attorney  
Reg. No. 46,602  
P.O. Box 489  
Hickory, N. C. 28603  
Telephone: 828/901-6725

Date: November 11, 2003